



SEAT PLEASANT NEWS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY EDITION

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City of Seat Pleasant

Mayor

Eugene W. Grant

Council President

Latasha Gatling

(At Large Councilmember)

Ward I Councilmember

Elenora Simms

Ward II Councilmember

Aretha Stephenson

Ward III Councilmember

Reveral Yeargin

Ward IV Councilmember

Gerald Raynor

Ward V Councilmember

Darrell Hardy

AT Large Council member

Kelly Porter

Acting City Administrator/

Treasurer

Robert L. Ashton

Chief of Police

Samuel Prue

Director of Public Works

Johnny Thompson

City Clerk

Dashaun Lanham

NEW CITY COUNCILMEMBER SWORN IN

On Monday, January 25, Aretha Stephenson was sworn in as the newest member of the Seat Pleasant City Council. She is filling the vacancy left by Brian K. Shivers, former Councilmember for Ward II, who resigned to pursue his masters at Howard University. The City Charter makes provision for the City Council to appoint a successor in the event of a vacancy until the next scheduled election. The vacancy is filled by the favorable votes of a majority of the remaining members of the Council, which Ms. Stephenson received. Family and friends attended the ceremony which was held at City Hall. Afterwards, Ms. Stephenson settled into her duties as a new councilmember and participated in her first Council meeting after being sworn in.



Councilwoman Stephenson after being sworn in at City Hall. Councilwoman Elenora Simms is behind her.

POLICE RECEIVES GRANT FUNDING FOR NEW RADIOS

The Seat Pleasant Police Department was recently awarded a grant by the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention in the amount of \$68,328 to upgrade their radios. Prince George's County Communications Center will soon be switching to a new digital system and without the upgrade, the police department would have been prevented from being able to perform the basic critical function of receiving and responding to calls for service from City residents. This funding will enable the department to purchase new 700-800 MHZ portable radios which will allow the police department to continue to use the Prince George's County Police Communication Center. The new radios will also allow communications with Washington, D. C. and Virginia as well. The upgrades will take place in 60 days.

IMPORTANT CENSUS INFORMATION
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GREETINGS FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Greetings! It is with great pleasure that I write to you on behalf of the City of Seat Pleasant City Council. As we embark on this New Year, please know that we are working hard to improve services and the quality of life for the residents of Seat Pleasant. There is not a moment that goes by that you are not our top priority. With that, I ask that if you have any questions, comments, or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us at City Hall, (301) 336-2600.

As you know we have been without a Chief of Police for almost a year, however, I am proud to announce that on January 4 our new chief, Samuel Prue arrived for duty and was sworn in by the Honorable Mayor Eugene W. Grant. We are confident that the Chief along with our outstanding Police Officers will continue to provide quality protection to the City and its residents. I would be remiss if I did not mention the excellent job of Seat Pleasant's finest in December with the recovery and apprehension of Sen. Corker's family vehicle and the suspects. I ask that you continue to support our police department in their efforts to protect and serve our community. I also ask that we remain vigilant as a community and be aware of your surroundings at all times, and in a time of need do not hesitate to contact the police department at 911 for an emergency. For all non-emergencies, please contact (301) 333-4000.

In addition to the new Chief of Police, we have filled the vacant council seat in Ward II. On January 25, the Prince Georges County, Clerk of the Court, swore in Mrs. Aretha Stephenson. We are confident that Ms. Stephenson will continue the community legacy of former Councilman Brian Shivers.

The City Council has also been working hard in the renovation of the Feggans Center, as it is the hub of our community. As many of you know, we have submitted to our state Delegates and Senator a request for a bond bill to aid in the renovation cost of the Feggans Center. We will need the help and support of the residents at the bond hearing. I ask that you contact City Hall if you would like to come out and show your support in March. Remember, this our community and it will take all of us to move it forward. In addition, our state representatives will be hosting District 24 night in Annapolis on March 1. Please look for more information in your mailbox on both the Bond Bill hearing as well as District 24 community night in Annapolis.

In conclusion, please continue to support your community and its leaders. I look forward to seeing each one of you at our Public Meeting the 2nd Monday of each month. Also, please do not forget to complete the Census this year as that is one of the means by which we receive funds to improve our community. It is imperative that everyone in your household is counted so that the city cannot only have an accurate count of its residents, but also so, we are not shortchanged when it comes to funding. Again, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

LaTasha C. Gatling

Council President

City of Seat Pleasant, A City of Excellence

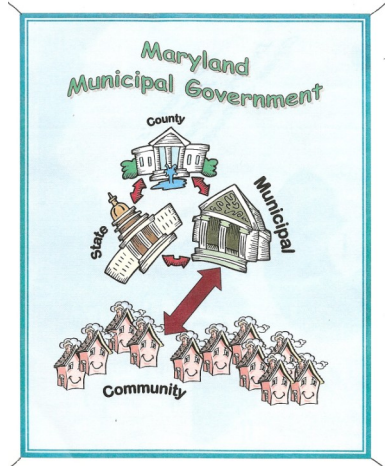
COUNCILMEMBER RECEIVES APPOINTMENT BY THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES

Elenora Simms, Councilwoman Ward I, was appointed to the 2010 National League of Cities Human Development Steering Committee. The National League of Cities mission is to strengthen and promote cities as centers of opportunity, leadership and governance. Councilwoman Simms also serves on the Maryland Municipal League's Convention Planning Committee and Prince George's County Municipal Association Board Member.



WHAT IS THE MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE?

In order to familiarize residents with organizations that Councilmembers are involved with, here is some information that pertains to the Maryland Municipal League. The Maryland Municipal League, founded in 1936 is a "voluntary nonprofit, nonpartisan association controlled and maintained by city and town governments (Maryland has 157 Incorporated towns and cities). The function of the league is to strengthen the role and capacity of municipal governments through research, legislation, technical assistance, training and dissemination of information for its members. Through its membership in the National League of Cities, the League offers legislative representation in Washington, urban research programs and a national municipal government information exchange".



A diagram of municipal government

The Maryland Municipal League hosts conferences every year for elected officials to provide information and offers workshops relating to municipal issues. A video about the Maryland Municipal League is available for viewing at their website but the league is currently working on a video that is more geared to residents rather elected officials that will be available soon. Seat Pleasant is currently working towards a "Banner City" designation by the Maryland Municipal League for cities that demonstrate involvement in community and governmental affairs. Further information regarding the Maryland Municipal League will be available in upcoming issues of the City newsletter to provide a more in-depth look into the organization.



UPDATED WEBSITE IN THE WORKS FOR SEAT PLEASANT

The City of Seat Pleasant is currently undertaking the task of updating its website. The focus of the new website will be to make the site more user-friendly and accessible while providing helpful and useful information. The goal is help to streamline access to City departments and services in an effort to foster better communication between residents and City government. The website will also provide current City news and events as well as showcasing what the City has to offer

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE: SAMUEL PRUE

January 04, 2010, I was named Police Chief of Seat Pleasant. During the past 15 years, I have seen this community and agency change in many different ways. Crimes today are a lot different, so the way our agency responds to crime has to change with society. The department has been fortunate to have Community leaders and Chiefs that have been able to think ahead and make forecasts as to what paths must be taken to insure the needs are met. My mission remains the same as my predecessors; to provide the highest standards of service in partnership with the community I serve. In striving to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, the agency must understand what are the concerns in the community, and make an assessment of the department to determine what is needed to get the job done. The Seat Pleasant Police Department values community input to address concerns.

Some years ago former Chief Ronald Harvey introduced a new concept to the department called Community Oriented Policing (COP). The concept involved a new way in which officers conducted their day-to-day duties that involved all sectors of the department from Administration, to Criminal Investigation and Patrol Division. The goal was to share information with the public and receive feedback from all the sectors of the community to help provide a better and higher quality of service for the citizens of Seat Pleasant.

I in turn, would like to implement the concept of COP and take it to the next level. The department's first order of business will be to focus on actual problem resolution in the community to make the city safer. With that in mind, citizens in the area of the 6500 block of Seat Pleasant Drive and adjacent streets should be aware of several recent break-ins. Officers have been distributing flyers to keep citizens informed and to provide them with contact information if they desire have their homes evaluated by an officer to outline recommended security measures.

The second order of business is for Neighborhood Watch groups to be revitalized. Lastly, new technology has been introduced to the city council to aid in the proactive strategies to combat criminal activity. The agency has strived to become futurist thinkers to continue the efforts to provide the best police service in the City of Seat Pleasant.

I would like to thank Sgt Leroy Patterson for a "JOB WELL DONE!" He managed the Seat Pleasant Police Department during the city's efforts to hire a chief. He along with Sgt Herbert Pettiford seamlessly transitioned the departments policing and maintained suitable community coverage even during manpower constraints. They re-introduced the "Reserve officer's Program," to increase manpower and submitted the grant proposal for the new 700 MHZ Radio System along with the C-Safe coordinator Ms. Valencia Moss. I look forward to the challenge of serving the citizens of Seat Pleasant as Chief of Police and bridging the gap between government and community!

HOMESTEAD TAX CREDIT

Legislation was enacted in the 2007 session of the General Assembly that required homeowners in the City of Seat Pleasant to submit a onetime application which started January 1, 2009 in order to continue their eligibility for the Homestead Tax Credit. The Homestead Tax Credit limits the amount of assessment increase on which a Homeowner will pay property taxes in that tax year on the one

property actually used as the owner's principal residence. The reason why the application process was needed is because some property owners were improperly receiving the credit on vacation home and rented properties. Counties and Municipal governments were losing tax revenues needed to provide important services to their residents. The only way to verify residency of the homeowner was to require an application and have the filer provide his or her social security number.

The Department of Assessments and Taxation has included this application in the Assessment Notices s mailed to property owners on December 29, 2009. **It is important the homeowner complete this application as soon as possible.**

Once you have received your assessment notice may file the Homestead Tax Credit Eligibility application one of three ways listed below:

- By Mailing the application to the address below (If you fill out the application manually, and mail it, the due date is 60 days from the date of notice containing the application. For example, if the date of the notice is December 28, the due date is February 28, 2010).
- By Using the online Homestead Eligibility Application (Application online is due April 1, 2010).
- By Printing and mailing the pdf application on the State Department of Assessment and Taxation web site <http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/Homesteadapp.htm>

The State of Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation mailing address is:

Department of Assessment and Taxation
Homestead Tax Credit Program
301 West Preston Street
Baltimore Maryland 21201

The State of Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation web site is:

<http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/Homesteadapp.htm>

The State of Maryland Department of Assessment and Taxation phone number is:

410-767-2165.

If you have any questions please contact Robert L. Ashton City Treasurer 301/336-2600 extension 2230.

FROM THE OFFICE OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Seat Pleasant Code Enforcement Department is pleased to announce extended hours of enforcement. The Code enforcement department now falls under the police department which is located at 6264 Central Ave in the Seat Pleasant Police Department Resource Center. Our office hours are from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm. The reason for our extended hours of operation is due to the on boarding of the part-time code enforcer, Mr. Ukkundo'Oohwaka. The extension of our hours of operation is due the city's success at obtaining funding from the Governor's Office of Crime Control to hire a part-time code enforcement officer.

This position will allow evening and weekend enforcement, which in turn will be conducive to greater coverage in maintaining beautification of the city and reducing code violations that occur outside of regular business hours. Some of the violations that will be targeted are: stored vehicles, commercial vehicles, illegal dumping, illegal construction, trash and properly maintaining inclement weather conditions. A schedule has been set to address each individual ward to accommodate equal coverage of enforcement throughout the week.

(Code Enforcement continued)

The mission of the Code Enforcement Department is to help maintain and beautify the community in which our residents live by strictly enforcing city and county codes and by educating residents. The Department looks forward to working with the citizens, business community and the many visitors that frequent the "City of Excellence". The following are the top five codes that frequently appear in violation:

1. Stored vehicles- unregistered and dismantled
2. Trash and Debris
3. Overgrown grass
4. Illegal dumping
5. Abandoned properties

The code enforcement department is working very diligently to abate these violations and we need the help and support of the residents to accomplish this.

Please be reminded owning Pit Bulls is illegal in Prince George's County. Effective February 3, 1997, in compliance with the Prince George's County Code, Section 3-185.01, it became illegal to own a nonregistered Pit Bull in PG County. Pit Bulls are defined as:

- Staffordshire Bull Terrier Breed
- American Staffordshire Terrier Breed
- American Pit Bull Terrier Breed
- or, any dog that exhibits the characteristics of the pit bull more than any other breed.

For more information, please call the Prince George's County Animal Management Division at 301-499-8300.



CENSUS 2010 - IT'S IN OUR HANDS

The U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States, and is required by the Constitution to take place every 10 years. The data collected by the Census helps to determine the disbursement of over \$400 billion in Federal funds for hospitals, schools, streets and highways. Also the Census helps to determine the number of seats your state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In March, census questionnaire forms will be delivered to every resident in the United States and Puerto Rico. The questionnaire takes less than ten minutes to complete. The form consists of ten (10) short questions. Just complete the form and mail it back in the prepaid envelope. The form will be available in a bi-lingual version as well. **THAT'S IT!!!!!!**

APRIL 1, 2010 IS NATIONAL CENSUS DAY.

This day is a point of reference for mailing your completed form.

The information you submit is private and confidential. *By law* the U.S. Census Bureau cannot share your questionnaire answers with anyone including federal and law enforcement agencies.

Like a job with the Census? Thousands are needed for temporary jobs, especially those who are bilingual. Call the toll free job hotline at 1-866-861-2010.

WORDS OF ADVICE FROM THE SEAT PLEASANT'S CITIZENS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CPAC)

Don't be a victim. CPAC wants citizens to lead safe and happy lives - here are five tips for you:

1. Call the Police Non-Emergency Number - If you see anything suspicious, call the non-emergency number (301) 333-4000. The call will be directed to the Seat Pleasant Dept. and if they are unavailable, the call will be handled by the County. You do not have to identify yourself when you call. Remember call 911 ONLY for emergencies.
2. Gas Station Safety - Always lock your doors. Thefts take place when you're most distracted and thieves can steal what you have in a matter of seconds.
3. Good Locks - Good locks on windows and doors make it difficult for would be attackers and burglars to get in. Invest in an alarm system if at all possible.
4. Good Lighting - Leave porch lights on at night or if you expect to return after dark.
5. Know the people on your block! - Know who your neighbors are - it's easier to recognize strangers to your block. For extra protection, start the Neighborhood Watch Program on your street. If you need help, let us know.

If there is anything you'd like CPAC to discuss with the Police or Fire Department, feel free to e-mail us at cpac.seatpleasant@live.com. CPAC meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Seat Pleasant Police Department.

SEAT PLEASANT CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

The Seat Pleasant Citizens Association is the recognized civic association for the city of Seat Pleasant. Its purpose is to engage citizens on a civic and political level for the betterment of the city. The association was founded in February 2009 by a group that was selected by Ward One resident Jacqui Battle with the support of Mayor Eugene Grant. The citizens, Crystal Adams, Angela Scott, Octavius Brown, the author, Leta Barner, Lucy Kinnard, Cynthia Perry, Angela Brooks and Sheila Wright convened weekly for about three months to create a mission statement, bylaws and a set of standards for the organization. During these formative stages, attorneys would come to meetings to discuss issues such as incorporation and the benefits of being a 501C4. The civic association held an open house on May 18 at the Seat Pleasant Activity Center. Forty residents attended the meeting and about 20 joined that evening.

The first general meeting was held on June 16. Acting Police Chief Wendell Brantley and Alyson Harkins of the Community Law Center of Baltimore were the speakers. Since that time, Del. Joanne Benson, Prince George's County Democratic Central Committee Chairman Terry Speigner, Sen. Benjamin Cardin aide Carlton Atkinson, Rep. Donna Edwards aide Rahsheim Wright, Prince George's County Civic Federation President Joe Brice and Seat Pleasant Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Koko Barnes and political activist and former Obama operative Karen Toles have served as speakers to the association.

The association is a member of the Prince George's County Civic Federation and the Coalition of Central Prince George's County Community Organization. Our meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month, starting at 7 p.m. For more information, call James Wright at 202-386-8354 or e-mail Jamesw102@hotmail.com.

City of Seat Pleasant

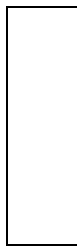
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Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743



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UPCOMING EVENTS.....

Ward I Meeting

Thursday, February 25th

6:00 p.m.

Seat Pleasant City Hall

6301 Addison Road

Seat Pleasant, Maryland 20743

24th Legislative District Night

Monday, March 1st

6:00 p.m.

Senate House

Annapolis, Maryland

For more information and seniors desiring to attend
call 301-336-2600



NOTE TO RESIDENTS: When filing taxes this year, please remember to confirm that you live in Seat Pleasant Maryland and not Capitol Heights. It impacts dollars that come to the City. Capitol Heights is merely a designation of the U.S. Postal Service which has been applied to Seat Pleasant, Capitol Heights and Fairmount Heights.